



Planning Commission Department of Planning, Housing, and Zoning

MINUTES

June 5, 2025

1:30 p.m.

Video recordings of the Kent County Planning Commission meeting are available online for viewing on the County's YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/@kentcountygovernment2757>. Meeting materials are available on the County portal at <https://www.kentcounty.com/commissioners/kent-countys-agenda-and-minutes-portal>.

The Planning Commission met in regular session on Thursday, June 5, 2025, in the County Commissioners' Hearing Room at 400 High Street, Chestertown, Maryland. Members of the public were invited to attend in person or via conference call.

The following members were in attendance: Chair Joe Hickman, Jim Saunders, Ray Strong, Sean Jones, Bill Crowding, and Jon Quinn. Vice Chair Paul Ruge was absent and had made arrangements in advance.

Acting Planning Commission Attorney Thomas N. Yeager, Esquire, was present. Staff attending included Bill Mackey, AICP, Director; Carla Gerber, AICP, Deputy Director; Robert Tracey, AICP, Associate Planner; Beth Grieb, Office Manager, serving as Clerk; and Tyler Arnold, GIS Specialist.

Representatives for Gillespie Precast, LLC included Andrew Gillespie, President; and Kevin Shearon, P.E., LEED AP, DMS & Associates.

Representatives for Great Oak Manor included Kevin Shearon, P.E., LEED AP, DMS & Associates; and Calin Taralunga, business manager.

Representatives from Millington Crossing included Jim Constantine, PP, LRK; Russ Richardson, property owner; and Chip MacLeod, Esq.

Individuals who signed the sign-in sheet included John Lysinger, Janet Christensen-Lewis, Wallace Reynolds, and Rick Lankford.

Chair Hickman called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

MINUTES

Mr. Crowding moved to accept the minutes for May 1, 2025, as submitted. Mr. Strong seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

APPLICATIONS FOR REVIEW

22-53 Gillespie Precast LLC -- Major Site Plan (Preliminary) -- Storage Yard Expansion
Location: 27030 Morgnec Rd., Chestertown -- Second Election District -- Industrial (I) & Industrial Critical Area (ICA)

Mr. Tracey presented the staff report for the application for expansion of a contractor's storage yard, construction of a storage building, installation of storm water management area, and construction of new entrance onto MD Route 291. The applicant also proposes two, phased-in, concrete manufacturing plants and aggregate bins.

Adopted on July 10, 2025

Key Issues Discussed: The application requires waivers for access and curb cuts. The applicant requested a second entrance approximately 700 feet from the existing entrance, which requires waivers regarding curb cut spacing standards and site access requirements. The Commission discussed what constitutes practical difficulty for waiver approval and addressed truck circulation, traffic movements on Route 291, and sight distances.

Applicant Testimony: Kevin Shearon of DMS and Associates and Andrew Gillespie of Gillespie Precast testified that the State Highway Administration (SHA) approved the second entrance in a letter dated June 30, 2023. They explained that the second entrance is needed for safe truck circulation with trucks coming in one entrance and exiting the other, similar to a waiver that was granted for their other facility. The first phase will not have full-time employees and therefore will not require septic and water systems, while the second phase will require coordination with the Health Department for bathroom facilities.

Public comment was received from Wallace Reynolds.

Commission Discussion: The Commission expressed concern about determining safety hazards without traffic engineering expertise. Staff commented that the County relies on SHA's engineering review for safety issues. There was extensive discussion about requiring one entrance for ingress and one for egress with proper signage, including debate about whether to restrict the directional access to truck traffic only versus all vehicles. The Commission agreed that signage would be critical for proper enforcement of any restrictions.

Waivers Motion: Mr. Crowding moved to grant Gillespie Pre-Cast LLC/Morgan Creek Land Holdings a waiver for the curb cuts on their proposed site, approximately 700 feet apart, provided that the entrances and exits have the proper signage to restrict truck traffic to one entrance and one exit, with signage to be determined appropriate at final site plan review, finding that the proposal complies with the spirit and intent of Land Use Ordinance and Comprehensive Plan; that the waiver will not cause substantial detriment to adjacent or neighboring properties; based on testimony, that the waiver will not create a safety hazard or increase traffic congestion; that the waiver is the minimum necessary to relieve a practical difficulty and is not sought for convenience, profit or caprice. Mr. Saunders seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Site Plan Motion: Mr. Crowding moved to grant preliminary site plan approval to Gillespie Pre-cast LLC/Morgan Creek Land Holdings for the expansion of the contractor storage yard from 5.38 acres to 13.36 acres, as well as the construction of a 60' x 88' storage building, storm water management facility, the new entrance onto Maryland Route 291, and for the future phase of two, 80' x 200', concrete manufacturing plants, and to install aggregate bins and ramps, subject to providing a certified engineer's report addressing industrial performance standards inclusive of the newly proposed structure; an updated narrative in accordance with procedures and standards for major site plan review as established in Article 6, Section 5.4.B, Kent County Land Use Ordinance; front, side and rear elevations of the proposed equipment storage buildings; recognizing State Highway approval of the proposed access; approval of an erosion and sediment control / stormwater management plans; and submission of all sureties for stormwater management, sediment and erosion control, and landscaping. Mr. Jones seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

*24-27 Freedom Properties GOM, LLC -- Major Site Plan (Final) -- Accessory Uses and Structure for Retreat
Location: 10568 Cliff Road, Chestertown -- Sixth Election District -- Critical Area Residential (CAR)*

Ms. Gerber presented the staff report for the final site plan for a new accessory structure for a demonstration kitchen and yoga studio at Great Oak Manor. No change in guest rooms was requested. Staff recommended

approval contingent upon final stormwater management plan approval, landscaping/buffer enhancement sureties, and lot line adjustment recordation.

Applicant Testimony: Mr. Taralunga testified that the project is substantially unchanged from the preliminary approval in March 2025, with architecture 80-85% complete and stormwater management being addressed.

Commission Discussion: The Commission discussed parking restrictions on Cliff Road, grass overflow parking lot, Health Department acceptance of septic reserve area, and temporary barriers to protect septic area during events.

Site Plan Motion: Mr. Crowding moved to grant final site plan approval for Freedom Properties GOM LLC operating as Great Oak Manor for the accessory structure to be used as a demonstration [kitchen] and yoga studio, subject to providing an approved sediment erosion control and stormwater management plans and submission of the required sureties; submission of required sureties for landscaping, buffer enhancement, and tree clearing mitigation; and recording of the lot line adjustment plat. Mr. Strong seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Courtesy Presentation by LRK, Inc. -- Update and General Information on Millington Crossing

Presenter: Jim Constantine, LRK Principal of Planning, on behalf of Rich Richardson Properties team

Mr. Constantine reviewed the history of the growth area designated in the 2018 County Comprehensive Plan, the 2022 public workshop at the Millington Firehouse and the 2024 new mixed-use zoning. He presented preliminary design guidelines including environmental stewardship, architectural character, and the parkway concept. The coordination of the wastewater treatment plant with development was discussed and design guidelines summarized.

Public comment was received from Janet Christensen-Lewis and Russ Richardson responding from the audience.

STAFF REPORTS

Meeting Schedule Changes: The July 3, 2025, meeting was rescheduled to July 10, 2025. The August 2025 meeting was cancelled due to equipment maintenance. The 2024 Annual Report will be presented at the July meeting.

ADJOURN

Chair Hickman called for a motion. Mr. Crowding moved. Mr. Jones seconded. The meeting adjourned at approximately 3:00 p.m.

/s/ Francis J. Hickman
Francis J. Hickman, Chair

/s/ William Mackey
William Mackey, AICP, Director

Please note 95% of this document was created by Claude III Sonnet from Anthropic with a transcript from YouTube.